

force behind the issues we have reviewed and who has shaped many of the legislative proposals we made as a result of our investigative and oversight efforts.

I also want to recognize the fine work and dedication of deputy staff director Priscilla Hobson Hanley; chief investigator Helen Albert; professional staff member Victoria Blatter; professional staff member Liz Liess; committee chief clerk Sally Ehrenfried; systems administrator Beth Watson; research assistants Lance Wain and Lindsey Ledwin; staff assistants Karina Lynch, Wendy Moltrup; and Myrna Webb; and GPO printer Joyce Ward. I extend my gratitude to these and all of the many committee staff, both past and present, who have contributed greatly to the mission of the committee.

I also want to recognize the fine work of Kathryn Gest, my press secretary and Mike Townsend, committee press secretary, for their excellent work in promoting the work of the Aging Committee.

Mr. President, the Aging Committee is perhaps unique among congressional committee due to its strong bipartisan cooperation. I want to congratulate and thank Senator PRYOR's dedicated staff on the committee for their many years of service to both the Senate and our senior citizens.

As I retire from the Senate, my staff will disperse to seek new opportunities and to make their contributions to the Nation in other ways. I wish them well and am deeply indebted to them for their service. The Senate Special Committee on Aging serves a very special purpose for the Congress and the Nation—and my staff on that committee has been very special indeed.●

FLOW CONTROL LEGISLATION

● Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, the U.S. Congress has failed this year to resolve a serious solid waste problem, that of flow control. Many solid waste management issues have been rightly addressed by State and local governments. State and local governments have decided how solid waste will be managed, preferring landfilling, incineration, recycling, composting, waste reduction, or a combination thereof. Similarly, they have also provided the needed funding for their solid waste programs.

However, while State and local governments have played the key role, the Federal Government has also been involved in the management of solid waste. Through regulatory actions and federal court rulings, the Federal Government has dramatically influenced how State and local governments have approached their solid waste problems. For example, when the Supreme Court recently held that State and local governments could no longer designate where privately collected waste could be disposed of, some States and localities—including many in my State of Minnesota—were adversely affected.

No longer could a State—except in rare instances—prohibit waste shipments from out-of-State or impose fees on waste disposal that discriminate on the basis of origin, nor direct where privately collected waste had to be disposed. As a result of this decision—and those of other courts—many local governments teeter on the brink of bankruptcy. Without the ability to guarantee a volume of waste flow to their waste facilities, local governments are less able to finance the facility, as well as to plan for future development.

Recent Congresses, in addition to this one, have attempted to address the flow control problem. Legislation has been introduced to give States the authority to restrict the amount of solid waste imported from other States. However, the Senate and House have yet to agree on a solution. Due to Congress' inability to address flow control, many local governments are contemplating—or have already undertaken—drastic actions such as laying off employees and raising taxes. In addition, some local governments have had their bonds downgraded. Alarmingly, it seems that if the flow control problem is not addressed soon, the financial problems of many communities in my State of Minnesota and elsewhere will only worsen.

I have wholeheartedly supported flow control legislation in the past. While many in Congress continue to oppose such legislation, I will not rest. In the 105th Congress, I will continue to advocate flow control legislation to help communities in our country better manage their solid waste.●

THE OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS BILL

● Mr. KEMPTHORNE. Mr. President, I wish to talk about the omnibus appropriations bill adopted by the Senate this week and signed into law by the President.

Passage and enactment before the end of the fiscal year was important to keep the Government in business and meeting the needs of American citizens.

The bill is significant in that it continues the Republican Congress' move to balance the Federal budget by the year 2002. It would have been easier had the President and his party not been more interested in obstruction over cooperation. Still, this Congress has cut around 300 unneeded Federal programs and saved \$53 billion in discretionary spending.

We provide for a higher level of defense funding than the President requested. We also approved strong anti-crime and antidrug packages, aggressive antiterrorism programs and stringent anti-illegal immigration measures. The bill increases funding to our States and communities hard hit by natural disasters.

My State of Idaho is one where residents and businesses had to cope with rains, floods, and wildfires this year.

There is a role for the Federal Government in helping stabilize riverbeds and hillsides, reducing environmental damage, putting businesses back on solid footing and firefighting efforts. This bill accomplishes that.

The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service watershed and flood prevention operations receive a \$63 million increase in this bill, \$5 million will go to help the Boise area recover from the devastating 8th Street fire in the Boise foothills. Without immediate attention to the fragile hillsides, this winter's rains and next spring's snowmelt could send tons of water and mud into homes and businesses all along the Boise front.

Additionally, the Bureau of Land Management's firefighting account will get a \$17 million increase over last year. Wildfires are claiming more and more Western land, and the BLM's resources are stretched to the limit.

The Forest Service, which manages more than 20 million acres in Idaho, gets a \$144.5 million increase in firefighting funding, \$17.7 million for management of the National Forest System, almost \$2 million for forest and rangeland research and nearly \$19 million in State and private cooperative programs.

The Federal Government owns two-thirds of the land in Idaho, so I'm pleased these needed increases will help develop and maintain solid management and cooperation with private and State landowners.

Preservation of our natural resources and treasured environment is important to me and to Idaho. I'm pleased to see the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will get a \$6 million dollar increase for the cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund. This grant program to the States will allow for cooperative agreements to save species and habitat. As I work on a revised Endangered Species Act, I want to encourage cooperation of States and private land owners to enter into these types of arrangements. States and local governments will play a greater role in species protection and recovery in the future.

Native Americans in Idaho and across the country will see increases in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service. These increases are important so we don't neglect our obligations to tribes and their residents.

Besides what this bill does, it is important for what it does not do. There are no increases in grazing fees for ranchers in the West. Other amendments which limit Native American sovereignty were also dropped.

Mr. President, I am proud that this Congress passed, and the President signed, the Safe Drinking Water Act. The bill is the only major environmental legislation of the 104th Congress, and represents the way environmental laws should work. It protects public health and safety while giving States and communities the flexibility